



PRESS RELEASE

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For Information Contact Public Affairs
Mike Johns (602) 514-7566

INTERNATIONAL HELL'S ANGELS CONSPIRACY ALLEGED IN INDICTMENT

PHOENIX, ARIZONA -- The United States Attorney's Office for the District of Arizona, announced today that a federal grand jury at Phoenix, Arizona, returned indictments against the following defendants:

1. Greg Surdukan, aka Snake, DOB 07/04/52 of 3645 W. Georgia Ave., Phoenix, Az.
2. Diana Surdukan, DOB 01/16/48, 3645 W. Georgia Avenue, Phoenix, Az.
3. Chris Baucum, aka Porker, DOB 02/09/53, 3302 W. Sierra Vista Dr., Phoenix, Az.
4. Blake Benson, DOB 10/12/60, 2450 W. Missouri, No. 161, Phoenix, Az.
5. Michael Hall, aka Jethro, DOB 12/30/62, South Africa.
6. Peter John Conway, DOB 06/13/66, South Africa.
7. Jerone Valdez, DOB 01/25/63, 3816 Santa Anita SW, Albuquerque, NM.
8. Jeffrey Spellman, DOB 04/14/60, Woburn, Ma.

The indictments allege conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute "South African Brown" methamphetamine from South Africa to Flagstaff, Arizona, Albuquerque, New Mexico and Massachusetts and elsewhere in the United States in violation of Title 21 of the United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1) and 841(b)(1)(A)(viii). A conviction carries a mandatory minimum sentence of ten years to life. One of the indictments also alleges unlawful possession of a firearm in relation to a drug trafficking offense by defendant Greg Surdukan, aka "Snake", aka "William Rogers" in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 924(c)(1). A conviction under Section 924(c)(1) carries a mandatory minimum 5 year sentence consecutive

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to the sentence on the drug charges. The sentence associated with a conviction of defendant Blake Benson, who is not charged in the conspiracy count, would be up to five years imprisonment.

The indictments allege that defendants Chris Baucum, Peter Conway, Michael Hall, Jeffrey Spellman, Diane Surdukan, Greg Surdukan and Jerone Valdez were members or associates of the Hell's Angels Motorcycle Club. The indictments allege that defendant Chris Baucum was the President and defendant Greg Surdukan was the Vice-President of the Flagstaff Chapter of the Arizona Hell's Angels, which later became the Nomad Chapter of the Arizona Hell's Angels. The indictments allege that defendant Michael Hall was the President and defendant Peter Conway was the Vice-President of the South African Nomads Chapter of the Hell's Angels. The indictments allege that defendant Jeffrey Spellman was the President of the Lowell, Massachusetts, Chapter of the Hell's Angels. The indictments allege that defendant Jerone Valdez was an associate of the Nomads Chapter of the Arizona Hell's Angels and a prior member of the Red Devils in Albuquerque, New Mexico, an associate club of the Hell's Angels. The indictments allege that Defendant Diane Surdukan was the wife of Greg Surdukan. The indictments do not allege that defendant Blake Benson was associated with the Hell's Angels.

An indictment is simply the method by which a person is charged with criminal activity and raises no inference of guilt. An individual is presumed innocent until competent evidence is presented to a jury that establishes guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

The Department of Justice Strategic Plan, which is available at the internet site http://www.usdoj.gov/archive/mps/strategic2000_2005/goal1.htm specifically targets outlaw motorcycle gangs as a priority for Federal law enforcement efforts:

“Strategic Objective 1.1 VIOLENT CRIME - - Reduce the threat, incidence, and prevalence of violent crime, especially as it stems from organized criminal enterprises and drug and gang-related violence.”

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“Strategies to Achieve the Objective:

Target, investigate, and prosecute the most violent gangs in our cities and communities.

The Department has categorized the universe of these violent gangs into seven specific target groups including the outlaw motorcycle gangs, other domestic violent gangs, prison gangs, the People Nation, the Folk Nation, the Crips, and the Bloods. The gangs identified have many resources at their disposal with a distinct capacity to cross multijurisdictional boundaries. The Department's strategy is to provide the necessary leadership and to coordinate the investigative and prosecutorial activities with the appropriate law enforcement authorities across federal, state and local and international levels of government. Often local law enforcement lacks the resources and capabilities to deal with this level of criminal activity. Gang members migrate between cities and communities around the country to avoid apprehension and prosecution, escape retribution of rival gang members, establish new criminal markets and move their families for protection.”

The United States Attorney’s Office for the District of Arizona intends to aggressively carry out this priority. Seven other people associated with the Hell’s Angels Motorcycle Club have also recently been prosecuted by the Tucson Branch Office of the United States Attorney.

The investigation preceding the indictment was conducted by the Violent Street Gang Task Force in Phoenix and the Mountain Eagle Safe Streets Task Force in Flagstaff, including the FBI, Phoenix Police Department, Mesa Police Department, Arizona Department of Corrections, Arizona Department of Public Safety, Coconino County Sheriff’s Office, Flagstaff Police Department and the United States Marshal’s Service. The FBI in Boston and Albuquerque also assisted with the investigation.

The prosecution is being handled by Patrick J. Schneider and Kevin Rapp, Assistant United States Attorneys, District of Arizona, Phoenix, Arizona.

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